

A WALK THROUGH JAPANTOWN — 1935



Post Street between Laguna and Buchanan streets, circa 1940



Post Street between Laguna and Buchanan streets, Dec. 1988

INTRODUCTION

The most often discussed period of Japanese American history is the World War II experience. While the impact of the internment was tremendous, it has tended to overshadow other aspects of Nikkei history that are equally worthy of study.

In this issue, we will examine the thriving Japantown community that existed in San Francisco during the '30s—a Japantown much larger and with a greater variety of businesses than the one today.

The following account is one of a number of Japanese American materials collected as part of the Survey of Ethnic Minorities in the San Francisco Bay Area in the 1930s. The survey was administered by Dr. Paul Radin. Hokubei Mainichi staff members and others have checked the article for accuracy and made minor revisions.

The writer promised Japantown residents that their names would not appear in the survey, hence the use of initials. The Hokubei has added some of the names with the permission of the individuals' families.

Names of businesses were also frequently omitted from the original text. The Hokubei has added the names whenever possible.

GEARY STREET

The "Japanese Town" in San Francisco starts at (Laguna and) Geary Street. (Moving west on the south side of Geary Street) we begin with the China Chop Suey shop owned and run by a Chinese.

Next door is the Dupont Co., a grocery store run by a Mrs. W., a widow, and her son, dealing in Japanese goods and delivering to all parts of the city. This is because the Japanese are very much scattered throughout the city, and customers prefer to order by phone, finding it inconvenient and impossible to shop personally in Japan Town.

Upstairs, there is a Buddhist Church, which has only a small congregation, but which is nevertheless a temple of worship.

A Chinese laundry occupies the adjacent property, together with a small shoe repair shop (Tani Shoe Shop, owned by Dai-goro Tani), one of three run by a Japanese.

Next is a row of small cottages, part of a rooming house owned by the proprietor of a store which deals in jewelry and in dry goods (Zaiman Co.). The proprietor, Mr. Z., is a well-known citizen. He has six children, all of whom are grown up now and have left home to work. A few are married.

His small business, catering both to local people and to visitors, is kept going because of the length of time it has been in business—some 25 years or so.

Next door, there is a coal yard, run by a Japanese.



The Nichi Bei Bussan store located at 1701 Post St., circa 1940

Then we find a barbershop (Asakura Barber Shop), whose owner is a tennis champion, an amateur, but well-known to lovers of that sport.

We next have a hotel, half rooming house (Nankaiya Hotel, owned by Heitaro Hirano), catering to people returning to Japan, which arranges tickets for them and so forth.

Benkyodo is a confectionery store dealing in Japanese sweets. They say the Japanese eat beans in some form every day. This is true. The Japanese eat beans as a main dish. Beans are also served as a side dish and as a special treat—in soup and in candy. Also, when one is sick, beans become a convalescent food. Japanese eat bean cakes even as sweets, and in this form, beans are given as gifts.

Last year, Benkyodo was under contract, and all the Japanese tea cakes sold at the Japanese concession at the Chicago Century of Progress World's Fair were made at that firm. Mr. O. (Sueichi Okamura) has been in business for some 25 years, making this the oldest of the six confectionery firms in operation in Japan Town.

Moving on to the next building, the last on the south side of Geary, we find the Hokubei Hotel, a Japanese rooming house apartment. Mr. Y. also operates the (Nichihei Hotel) in Yokohama, and does a good business with his countrymen who visit San Francisco, traveling between Japan and the United States.

Now, crossing the street, we have the B.G. Garage, run by an American. Next to that there is a laundry (Crown Tailors, owned by Kazuto Suenaga), a small one but quite busy, and then a

cleaning and dyeing establishment.

Next there is a beer parlor, which is a notorious place, and beside that, a transfer company. The (Shima Transfer and Draying Co.) is run by Mr. S. (Hikoichi Shimamoto) and his younger brother (George Gentoku Shimamoto), an architect, who is a college graduate and specializes in Japanese architecture. Then come some flats, occupied by Negroes and a few Japanese.

Continuing on Geary Street from Buchanan Street, going down toward Fillmore Street, we have a Japanese daily on one corner, and G.'s (George's) Candy Kitchen on the other.

The New World is one of three Japanese newspapers in San Francisco. Their staff is composed of some 15 people, and it is one of the oldest Japanese newspapers published on the Pacific Coast. It is said that the New World is operating at a loss and the staff is very much underpaid. Too much competition between the three dailies is responsible for their difficulty.

George's Candy Kitchen is operated by Mr. L., a second-generation man of about 34. He has been in business for about three years, and is the only manufacturer of (Western) candy among the Japanese.

Going down that side of the street, next to the Candy Kitchen we find a pool parlor, a bungalow occupied by an American, and a barbershop (Owata Barber Shop). There is also a Japanese restaurant where parties are held, and drinks in the form of Japanese sake are served by waitresses. It is the equivalent of a nightclub, with wine, women and song. They have been

pretty hard hit by the Depression.

Next door, there is a bird store. According to the newspapers, this establishment was raided by narcotics agents, who uncovered a dope cache there. This led to the subsequent discovery of a dope ring in San Francisco.

Adjacent to the bird store are two residences, then the Hokubei Asahi Daily News office, the structure of which was, until recently, a funeral home. The Hokubei Asahi is staffed entirely by former Japanese American News—another vernacular daily—workers, who walked out on strike some years ago.

Rows of tenement houses come next, then a tailor (Inouye Tailor, owned by Shujiro Inouye), a fishing rod store (Henry's Tackle Shop), and a few more flats, down to Webster Street, where the Japanese district ends a block short of Fillmore Street.

There is a restaurant (Ace Restaurant), run by a Japanese, which caters to the Negroes and a few whites, and then a seed store (Oriental Seed and Plant Co.) on the same side of the street. Until recently, a hotel was operated by a Japanese on the corner of Webster and Geary streets, but it went broke and closed up a few months ago.

Next door to the New World Daily News is a furniture shop (SK Furniture) dealing in old and new furniture of every type. Then comes a Chinese laundry, and next a drug store (Ogawa Drug Store).

A photographer occupies the upstairs of a sporting goods store (Sugiyama Co.). A person by the name of Mr. S. occupied and operated the photo studio until a few months ago. Mr. S. was

located there for some 20 years, and his exhibits of photo art gained quite a reputation and won him prizes in exhibits all over the world. It was both a hobby and a business with him. He recently returned to Japan with his wife to go into business there.

The present man is a young man (Kazuo Wakasa), recently married and industrious and, as successor to Mr. S.'s business, (Wakasa Photo) does quite well.

From there on down toward Webster Street, there are rows of flats occupied mainly by Japanese of the working class.

At the end of the street there is a chimney shop, a Negro church, a restaurant, a Japanese fencing gymnasium and a grocery store.

POST STREET

Now, let's go one block north and start from Fillmore Street, going eastward up Post Street for four blocks to Octavia Street.

Starting at the south side, we find, in order, the G-K Shoe Store, a Chinese chop suey restaurant, an auction house, a sewing machine shop (Mikado Dressmaker), a Filipino barber shop and a pool hall.... Upstairs is a "shady" hotel (Nishikawa Rooming, owned by Sutejiro Nishikawa), with its unmistakable red sign reading "Rooms," and then a vacant lot full of stranded wrecks of old cars.

Next, we have another one of the "shady" places. Then there are two flats and a bootblack shop....

Back to the corner of Webster Street, we have a fish bait store, operated by Mrs. S. as a side business, dealing in sardines used as bait by the local fishermen. Mr. S. works in a laundry.

Next there stands a cleaning establishment, then a carpentry shop, and another Japanese restaurant specializing in parties. They serve, as the house specialty, fresh eel-fish every time (a ship) comes in from Japan. "Those snake-like fish—not for me," some cry, but they are simply delicious. The structure next door is a hotel....

There is a fish store (Soko Fish Market, operated by Kichiro Murai and legally owned by son Hajime) in the next building, which does a thriving business. Two flats follow, then apartments, with a pool parlor (Yamato Pool Hall, owned by Hidesaburo Hideshima), an employment agency (Hori Employment Agency, owned by Sojiro Hori) and a coffee shop (Nisei Grill) below them.

Next, there is another flat, and then another dry goods store (Nichi Bei Bussan, owned by Shojiro Tatsuno), across from Mr. N.'s emporium (Nakagawa's Shohin Kan). Originally these two owners were partners in one store, but they had a misunderstanding. Mr. N. then went across the street and built the large emporium as a competitor.

We go up Post Street from Buchanan, the center of San Francisco's Japan Town. We go up the slight hill on the south side. A corner confectionery (Matsuya) closed up due to the Depression recently and is now vacant.

Next door is a small vegetable store (Nakata Vegetable), where the wife looks over the shop while the husband is out. He has a truck and deals in vegetables, fruits and fish. His route carries him daily all over the city, door-to-door.

A restaurant (Minato Sushi) stands next to the vegetable store, and then there is a hardware store (Soko Hardware, owned by Masayasu Ashizawa).

Next, in order, we have a carpentry store (Soko Carpentry), the office of the night police patrol, a jewelry shop (Itatani Jewelry), another Japanese restaurant and drinking house (Mi-

tsuwa Tei), a chop suey house (King Inn), a camera and picture frame store (Midzuho Photo Supply), a printing shop (Toyo Printing), a doctor's office (Dr. Kunisada Kiyasu), two barbers (Futatsuki Barber Shop and Suzuki Barber Shop), a bath-house (Kikuno Baths), a confectionery store (Shinanoya, owned by Shinjiro and Masa Hosoda), a sweet shop (Willy's Sweet Shop, owned by Willy Ito), and a drug store (Taisho Drug) on the corner.

Crossing the street, on the other corner of Post Street, is an optical office operated by a young Japanese American. Next door is a pharmacy (Misawa Drug, owned by Sawaji Misawa), operated by a woman who is a registered pharmacist.

A sukiyaki restaurant (Kikusui Restaurant), a flat, a midwife's office (Murayama Maternity), a flat again, a hotel with a securities office (Nichihei Se-

curities, owned by Kenji Kasai) below, and a soy bean and noodle factory below that.

Next door is a cash grocery, carrying both Occidental and Oriental merchandise with low prices to keep the shopper from going to nearby Fillmore shopping district to purchase things. Of course, that is the main problem of merchants who have stores dealing mainly with Occidental goods.

Next door to the grocery is a flat with a beer parlor (Tiger Cafe) below. One of the two large Japanese book stores (Aoki Taisei-Do, owned by Michitatsu Aoki) occupies the next structure. A chop suey restaurant (Showa Low), now closed due to bad times, is located upstairs. It used to be owned by a Japanese who employed Chinese help.

Next there is a dentist, another beer parlor (Sushi Gen), two flats, a chop suey restaurant (Soo Chow), a fish market (Uoki, owned by Kitaichi Sakai), a drug store (Nippon Drug, owned by Hatsuto "Jim" Yamada) and a book store (Gosha Do, owned by Shoroku Ono) located on the corner of Buchanan.

From Laguna Street to Octavia are mainly flats—all Japanese. Here are the businesses located there: a drug store (Osaka Drug) on the corner, a grocery store (Nakai Co.), a motor repair shop (Pacific Motor & Battery), a carpentry shop (Arima and Sakaguchi). The two other flats are a soybean factory (Norio Co.) and an insur-

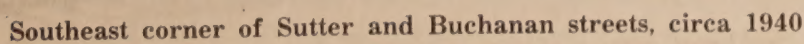


Buddhist Church of San Francisco, circa 1926

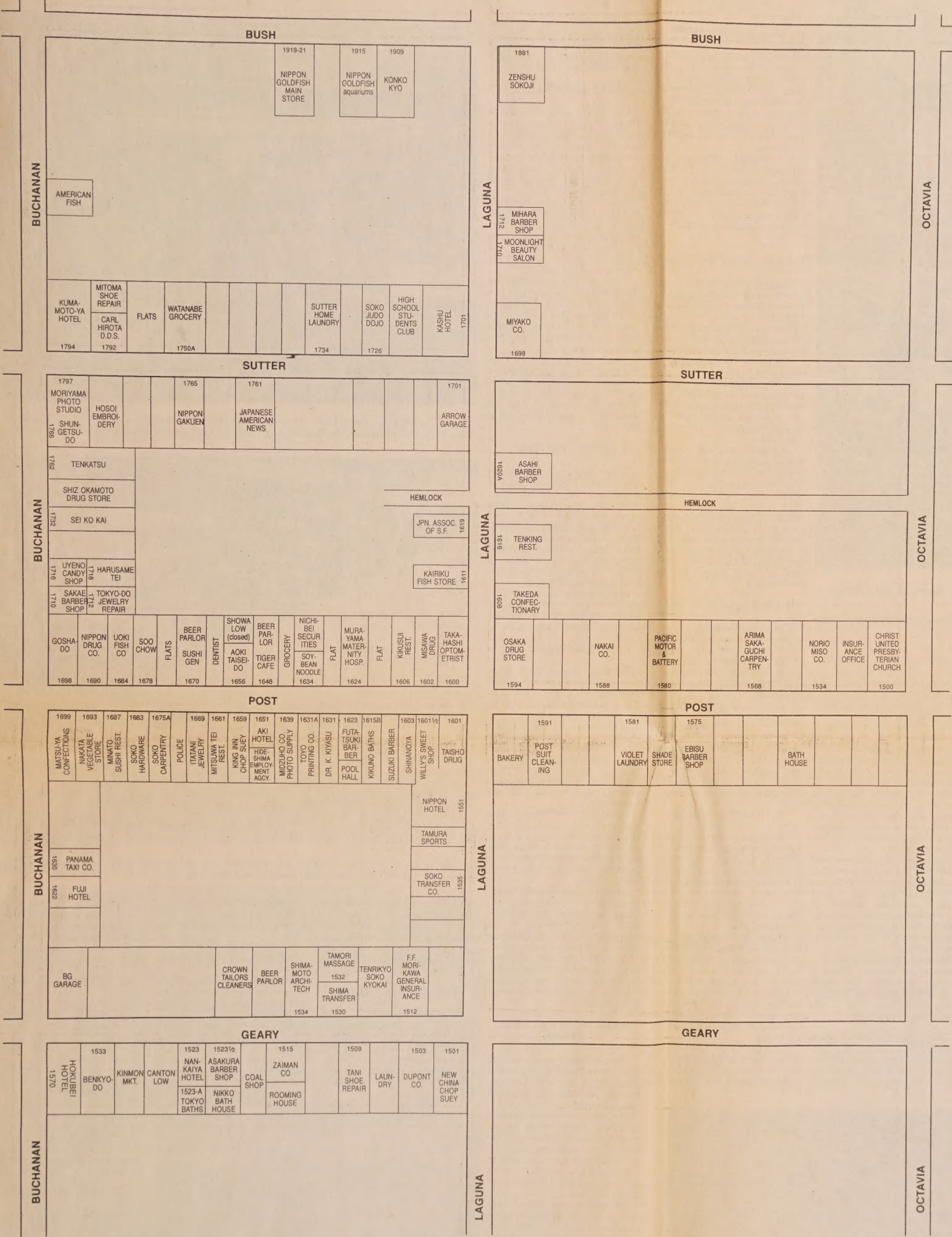
See Walk
(Continued on page 2)



George's Candy Kitchen located at 1600 Geary St., circa 1935



Pine Street, between Gough and Fillmore, is about equally divided between Caucasians and



The Kashu Hotel on the northwest corner of Sutter and Laguna, circa 1940.



Now standing on that corner is Christ United Presbyterian Church.



The Japanese Salvation Army Building, 1450 Laguna Street, circa 1940.



Today, the building houses the offices of the Chinese Consulate.

Japanese, with a sprinkling of Negroes. There are two Buddhist churches (Nichiren and San Francisco Buddhist), a grocery store (Yokohama Grocery), and the rest of the buildings are residences.

Now, taking the cross streets — Octavia, Laguna, Buchanan and Webster streets — we find the following. On Octavia, we have two churches. The first is a large Catholic church (Japanese Catholic Church), whose grounds include a school, an auditorium and a residence. Second, there is the Christian church (Christ United Presbyterian Church). There are only a few flats occupied by Japanese.

LAGUNA STREET

Laguna Street: only a few families live between Pine and Bush. Sutter, however, is seven-eighths Japanese. There is a barber shop (Mihara Barber Shop, owned by Kenji Mihara), a beauty salon (Moonlight), as well as a large hotel (Kashu Hotel) on the corner.

From Sutter to Post Street, there is a garage (Arrow Garage), an alley (Hemlock Street) where all the residents are Japanese, an office of the Japanese Association of San Francisco, and a small meeting room below.

A fish store (Murai Fish), a tailor, and an optical shop (Takahashi's) on the corner, complete that block.

On the other side of the street, there are a barber shop (Asahi Barber Shop), a restaurant (Tenking), a confectionery (Takeda's), and a drug store (Osaka) on the corner.

From Post to Geary, there are a hotel (Nippon Hotel), a sports shop, a transfer company (Soko), and a Negro hotel. Many flats are found on both sides of the street.

From Geary to O'Farrell Street, we have the Japanese Salvation Army occupying three-quarters of the block on the east side. On the other side, only the Japanese Association of America has its office in a flat on the corner.

O'FARRELL STREET

O'Farrell Street is also becoming part of Japan Town, with another church (Tenrikyo) and many residences in flats between Webster and Laguna streets.

BUCHANAN STREET

Buchanan Street is the busiest street, next to Post Street. It starts from California Street, on top of the hill, and runs down five blocks to O'Farrell Street. There are many stores along this street, especially from Sutter to Post, and Post to Geary. The rest of the buildings are residences and apartments.

On the east side, going down southward from Sutter Street, we have a confectionery (Shungetsu-do), a restaurant (Tenkatsu), a Christian church (Sei Ko Kai), a candy shop (Uyeno Co., owned by Gizo Uyeno), a barber shop (Sakae), and the corner bookstore (Gosha Do, owned by Shoroku Ono). There is also a Japanese nightclub type of

restaurant (Harusame-tei) in a flat above, as well as a jewelry repair shop (Tokyo Do).

On the west side, from Sutter Street, there is a grocery store (Yorozu-ya), a photo studio (Hanazono Studio, owned by Joji Hanazono) upstairs, a dentist (Masuichi Higaki, DDS), a doctor's office (Dr. Kan Uyeyama), a beer parlor (Ginza Cafe), a haberdashery, a radio/photography shop (Ota Radio Shop or Ota Singer Sewing Machine Shop, owned by Ichiro Ota), a sukiyaki restaurant, a grocery store (Tani Store), and a dry goods store (Nakagawa Shohin Kan, owned by Wakagusa Nakagawa) on the corner. That is all of that block.

From Post to Geary, on the north side, we have a vacant store, formerly a confectionery (Matsuya), a beer parlor (Poppy Cafe), a hotel, an optical office and a taxi office (Panama Taxi). On the corner is a garage (BG Garage).

The block from Geary to O'Farrell is all residences, with a large vacant lot, the projected

site of the Japanese branch of the YMCA.

The residences on Webster Street house a variety of groups, but are only occupied by Japanese families, here and there.

That's Japan Town. 1935.

Photo Credits

All the photos of old Japan town are courtesy of the Japanese American History Room except for the following:

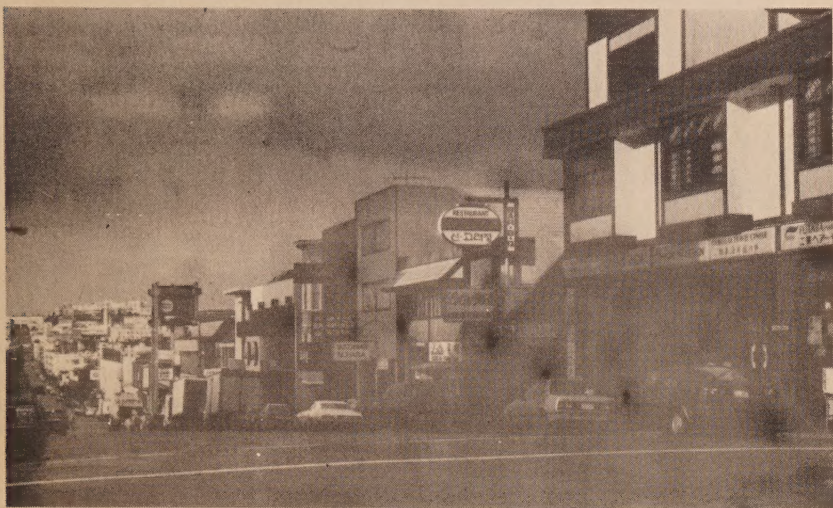
Tani family ("In This Issue," front page, main section); Shimamoto family (Shima Transfer, supplement page 4); Yoshitomi Fukushima (Nankaiya Hotel, page 4); Daisy Satoda (Soko Fish Market, page 4); Kiku Hori Funabiki (Hori & Co., page 5).

All present-day photos by Robert Tokunaga.



Southeast corner of Sutter and Buchanan streets, Dec. 1988

Before and Beyond 1935: A Look at Some



Above, a view from Laguna Street looking west down Post Street in 1940. Below, the same view in 1988.

Afterword

By LANE HIRABAYASHI

Dr. Paul Radin (1883-1959) was a world-renowned anthropologist. He was affiliated with many prestigious universities, among them UC Berkeley, University of Chicago, Fisk, Cambridge (England), Kenyon College, Black Mountain College, and Brandeis, where he held a chair in the Department of Anthropology until his death.

During the Depression years of the 1930s, Dr. Radin was engaged in two research projects. One of these was editing the massive Adolf Sutro collection.

In the same productive decade, he supervised and edited a large study focusing on ethnic minorities in the San Francisco Bay Area.

This project was funded by the State Emergency Relief Administration of San Francisco and Alameda counties. Its purpose was to document the cultural adjustment and contributions of no less than 12 different Third World and Caucasian minority groups to the city of San Francisco.

Unique for its time and massive in scope, the Survey of Ethnic Minorities in the San

Francisco Bay Area was perfectly in keeping with Radin's ongoing interest in the impact of American society on ethnic peoples.

From a number of descriptions, we know that Radin's approach in carrying out this study was both socio-historical and ethnographic. In terms of the latter method, special emphasis was put upon the collection of materials concerning beliefs, customs and oral tradition, as well as life histories. This was consistent with Dr. Radin's approach to ethno-history in general, and constituted his basic method throughout his academic career.

The Japanese American materials appear to have been collected in 1934 and 1935. Not much is known about this phase of the project. Two published articles based on the Japanese American part of the survey did appear in 1946, but presented only the barest outline of how and when the data were collected.

Unfortunately, no date or author's name appear on "A Walk Through San Francisco's Japantown, 1935." It was found — a plain manuscript without a title page — in the Ethnic Mi-

norities of the San Francisco Bay Area project archives.

Mary Sacharoff-Fast Wolf, curator of the archives, states that it could have been produced by any one of the people who worked for the project.

Project employees represented a wide cross-section of American society, including men and women of different ethnicities, students, writers and unemployed workers. All were referred to the project for employment during the difficult Depression period.

We hope that readers will enjoy "A Walk Through San Francisco's Japantown, 1935." As part of a unique study, it provides a first-hand portrait of key businesses and community institutions in Japantown during the middle of the Great Depression.

We would be pleased if, after reading this account, Hokubei readers take their own walk through San Francisco's Japantown, to envision it as it was more than 50 years ago.

Hirabayashi teaches Asian American studies at San Francisco State University. He has reviewed JA-related books for the San Francisco Chronicle.

With only a few exceptions, the businesses described in the 1935 study of San Francisco's Japantown are long gone.

Some businesses were never re-established after the World War II internment; some fell victim to the redevelopment of Japantown in the 1960s and '70s; still others relocated to another part of the city or outside of San Francisco.

The Hokubei Mainichi has attempted, with some assistance from our readers, to track down some of the businesses of the 1930s. While the following report is not exhaustive, we feel it is a representative sample.

WAKASA PHOTO STUDIO

Kazuo Wakasa was the industrious young man mentioned in the article and Thelma Wakasa was his new bride. According to Thelma, her husband had his photographs published in various publications nationwide.

"When we were evacuated to Arkansas," remembered Thelma, "we stored our belongings at the photo studio." While they were in the camp, word came that one night a truck pulled up to their studio and everything was taken.

Just before the war ended, a friend persuaded Kazuo to work in Chicago. The family followed him there after the war. They stayed there for nine years and then moved back to the Bay Area and opened a corner grocery store in Berkeley. Kazuo passed away several years ago.

Thelma fondly remembered her life with Kazuo. "We didn't have a lot of money, but we were happy."

TANI'S SHOE REPAIR

The owner of the shoe repair store was Daigoro Tani. His son George, now a resident of Millbrae, remembers that when the evacuation orders came, his father stored his shoe repair equipment in the backyard barn of a life-long friend in San Francisco.

After the family came back from Topaz after the war, Daigoro retrieved his equipment from his friend and opened a shoe repair shop across the street from the 1935 location. He retired in the early 1960s.

SHIMA TRANSFER

The owner of the transfer and draying company was Hikoichi Shimamoto. The company started in 1932, said his wife Mary. It ceased operations due to the evacuation. Hikoichi was picked up by federal authorities in February 1942 and taken to Bismarck, N.D.

His brother George, an architect, had to handle the family's business matters. The company had to sell its trucks for about 10¢ on the dollar just before they were sent to Tanforan Assembly Center and then to Topaz. Hikoichi was reunited with his family about a year and a half later.

After the war, Hikoichi's family returned to Japantown and set up a makeshift shop in a little garage at 1844 Sutter St.,

said Mary. About a year later the company moved to 1736 Sutter St. and eventually moved out of Japantown in 1966. It is now located on Third Street.

CARL HIROTA, DDS

Carl Hirota began what would eventually be a three-generation-long dental practice by opening up an office beneath the Kumamoto Hotel, remembered his wife Uta. It was across the street from the practice of Dr. Shozo Fujita, DDS.

When the war came, the Hirota family moved to Salt Lake City, outside of the zone prohibited to people of Japanese ancestry. Carl joined the Army and examined troops before they were sent off to war.

The doctor's dental equipment was put into storage at a warehouse in San Francisco. After the war, the family came back to San Francisco, where Carl re-established his practice in Japantown.

The practice was moved out of Japantown during redevelopment and was eventually passed on to his son-in-law, who now shares the practice with his daughter. Uta still helps out at the office.

CROWN TAILORS

Crown Tailors was run by Shiro Suenaga's parents, Kazuo and Misayo. Shiro recalled that when the evacuation orders came, his father had to sell everything. Kazuo sold his new Ford, new steam pressing machine, steam boilers and all of his equipment for a total of \$400. "We never saw the business again," said Shiro.

After coming back from Topaz in August of 1945, Kazuo went to work at a San Francisco hotel as a maintenance man.

FUJI HOTEL

Kameichi Tamaki's son Minoru said his father first opened up a hotel on Grant Avenue in San Francisco, then moved to the Barbary Coast and then to the Japantown site around 1923.

Minoru, who had a brother and three sisters, was asked if it was a neat experience for a kid to grow up in a hotel. "Not really," he replied. "We lived among strangers and there was no privacy."

Kameichi died in 1936. His wife took over the hotel until the evacuation. During the internment period, a bank took care of the hotel for Minoru's mother, who kept the deed with her at Topaz.

After the war, Minoru's mother and older sister came back to San Francisco and operated the hotel until the city bought the property in 1948 in order to begin a redevelopment project.

A photo of the hotel, taken by photographer Dorothea Lange, is displayed at the Smithsonian Institution's exhibit on Japanese Americans.

NAKATA VEGETABLE STORE

Masaichi and Tomoko Nakata took over Nakata Vegetable Store when Masaichi's uncle, Kuraji Nakata, returned to Japan in 1928.

Masaichi would wake up early in the morning to go to the produce market to purchase the fresh fruits and vegetables he was to sell that day. "I remember it was always very dark when he left," recalls his daughter, Masako Kimoto.

While Masaichi would load up his truck for deliveries to his regular customers throughout the city, Tomoko would watch over the store on Post Street. As was typical of Japantown business owners in those days, the Nakatas lived behind the store.

The war would close the shop and send the family to Tule Lake and then to Topaz.

"We lost everything," said Kimoto, explaining why her parents were unable to reopen after the war. Her parents, she said, performed day work following their return.

NIPPON HOTEL

Yonekichi Tanaka opened the doors of the 50-room Nippon Hotel in 1919 on the corner of Post and Laguna.

The building, which ran almost half a block down Laguna from Post to Geary, also housed Taisho Drug Store and Willy's Sweet Shop, recalls son Frank Tanaka. Frank, his brother and two sisters called the hotel home.

When evacuation orders came through, Yonekichi sold all the furniture before leaving for camp. The family did not own the building and thus lost the hotel to others.

The Tanakas did, however, own an apartment building on



Soko Fish Market circa 1937. Among those in the photo are proprietor Frank Murai (far left), Sam Furuichi (next to Murai), and Jack and George Mizono (center, under light).



Employees of Shima Transfer stand before the company's fleet of trucks at the San Francisco wharf. This composite picture was taken in 1940.

O'Farrell and Laguna, watched over by friends during the war. Following their return from camp, the family moved into their O'Farrell property, but never went back into the hotel business.

POST SUIT CLEANING

Risaku Enomoto's cleaning business was first located on Sutter Street, opening its doors in 1920. Moving to Post, the business was renamed to reflect the change — Sutter Street Cleaners became Post Suit Cleaning.

The business continued until evacuation, said daughter Eiko Ono, who was born and raised in Japantown. "After the war, my father was quite old," she

remembers. Time and the internment had taken its toll; he never went back into business.

SHINANNOYA CONFECTIONERY

Shinanoya Confectionery was started by Shinjiro and Masa Hosoda in the early part of the century and is now known as Hosoda Brothers, Inc. The store originally made and sold *manju*, *semei* and other snacks and did a little importing, said Toshiko Hosoda, wife of Juro Hosoda, one of the sons of the original owners. The other son is Tokuchi.

The family had to close up the store when the evacuation started. They locked it up and left for Topaz. When they got back,

they found everything in the store stolen, so they had to start all over again by selling ice cream and candy. It grew to be one of the largest import-export businesses in the city.

FUTATSUKI BARBER SHOP

Yakichi Futatsuki opened his two-chair Futatsuki Barber Shop in the mid-1920s.

Business was good until evacuation forced its closure, with Yakichi giving haircuts "up until the last minute," said daughter Mary Morino.

The family was incarcerated in Topaz, where Yakichi received special permission to continue his profession. Following the war, Morino's parents, now older and disillusioned, returned to Japan.

AKI HOTEL

Ichiro Kataoka opened the doors of the Aki Hotel in 1915. The building, which was owned by the family, stood on the south side of Post Street between Buchanan and Laguna.

Upon their evacuation, the family leased out the hotel. With the war's end and the terms of the lease still in place, the Kataokas lived in Sacramento until they could return to Nihonjin-machi.

"I remember playing 'kick the can' on Post," said daughter Mary Kataoka, one of five children.

Today, the Kataokas remain a part of the Japantown business community, operating Aki Travel Service in the Japan Center. Their mother, Shige Kataoka, is a healthy 93 years old.

HOKUBEI HOTEL

The story of the Hokubei Hotel begins on Stockton Street in Chinatown, where Kumekichi Takata opened the Geibi Hotel in 1913.

In 1919, he moved his operations to Japantown, opening the 40-room Hokubei Hotel on Buchanan Street. In 1925, Takata decided to return to Japan to open what became the Nichibei Hotel in Yokohama, and turned



St. Francis Xavier Mission on the northwest corner of Pine and Octavia streets. Above, as it looked in the 1930s; below, as it looks today at the same location.



Residents of the Nankaiya Hotel and Apartment in a photo taken around 1916. The business was still operating two decades later.



The Aki Hotel, located at 1651 Post Street, circa 1935.

of the Businesses and People

over the Japantown business to his son-in-law, Eiji Yoshimura. "I was born in the hotel," said Yonebo Yoshimura, Eiji's son, adding that at that time the use of midwives was routine. The family of eight lived in the building until they were evacuated to Heart Mountain.

The Yoshimuras, who owned the hotel, had a couple run the business for the duration of the war, continued another of Eiji's sons, Sunao, who remembers those days well.

Upon their return from camp, they found the hotel in "shambles" and had to fix it up before opening for business.

When the redevelopment process began, "we were forced to sell the building to the redevelopment agency," said Yonebo. The former site of the Hokubei Hotel is "now just a parking lot" next to the Buchanan YMCA. "It tore my poor father's heart to see that building torn down. That was his life."

SOKO HARDWARE

Soko Hardware was originally Tsuchiya Trading Co., according to Mas Ashizawa, present owner of Soko Hardware. "Mr. Tsuchiya introduced the bamboo rake to the United States," said Ashizawa. "He made a killing off of that."

Ashizawa's parents, Masayasu and Naka, bought the store in 1925 and renamed it Soko Hardware. It closed due to the evacuation. Masayasu put all of the inventory in boxes and kept it in the basement of the building next door. While they were in camp, the basement was ransacked, said Mas.

The relocation authorities stored what was left of the inventory in a car dealership on Van Ness. Car dealerships, since they were not able to sell cars during the war, were used as government warehouses.

The family came back after the war and picked up the pieces — literally and figuratively. With the few Japanese items and nuts and bolts that were not taken by the looters, Soko Hardware set up shop at 1669 Post St. The store is now located on the corner of Post and Buchanan.

NAKAMURA TAILORS

Seiichi George Nakamura operated his tailoring business on Laguna Street from the 1920s until the family's evacuation to Tanforan and Topaz.

The Nakamuras left camp for Chicago, where Seiichi applied his trade in the shop of a

hakujin tailor. In December 1948, the family returned to Japantown and lived on Buchanan Street above Evergreen Fountain. Seiichi continued to do alterations out of one of the rooms, recalls his daughter, Helen Uyeda.

After the Nakamuras moved out of Japantown in the early 1950s, Seiichi continued his one-room operation until the 1960s, when he retired.

SOKO FISH MARKET

Soko Fish Market was legally owned by Hajime Murai, but was actually run by his father Kiichiro, according to Masai Murai, wife of Kiichiro's young-est son Iwao "Ibo." Hajime was a minor in 1935, but the business had to be put under Hajime's name because Issei could not legally own land at the time.

Kiichiro retired in 1935 and sold the business to Sam Furuchi. The whereabouts of Furuchi could not be ascertained, but Masai said he is believed to be in Hawaii.

The Murai family was relocated to Heart Mountain.

KUMFAR LOW

Kumfar Low opened for business in Japantown in 1912, making it the second Chinese restaurant to open in the area. The restaurant was operated by the parents of Harry Wong, who is the owner of Wong's Bait and Tackle Shop, which is itself a long-time Japantown business.

Wong, who was born and raised in Japantown, said his family lived behind the restaurant. When his mother retired in 1950, Kumfar Low closed its doors. That same year, Wong opened his bait and tackle shop on Post Street near Yamato Garage, keeping the Wong business tradition in J-town alive and well.

DR. SHOZO FUJITA, DDS

Dr. Shozo Fujita began his dental practice in Japantown in 1912 and was there until his evacuation to Topaz. He put some of his dental equipment in storage, but decided to take other instruments with him, which allowed him to serve the dental needs of internees.

"He was one of the few dentists who took his instruments with him," said his daughter, Kathleen Date of Berkeley.

Following the war, he found his Japantown business location

occupied by residents and reopened his practice in Berkeley, where he continued until his death in 1958.

ASAHI BARBER SHOP

Roy Abbey, today a ceramics teacher and volunteer at Kimochi Inc., came to Japantown in 1935 and took over Jimmy Fujisada's business, Asahi Barber Shop.

Residing on Hemlock Street behind his shop, Abbey continued to tend the heads of many a Japantown resident until his evacuation to Topaz. The owner of the building kept the shop intact for him during the war and even moved from the Marina District to the building on Laguna to keep a watchful eye over the property.

"I was very lucky," said Abbey. "I loved plants and had them in the shop, and they were still there when I got back (from camp)."

He returned in 1945 and, renaming the shop "Roy's Barber Shop," opened for business right away.

Redevlopment caused him to move his business three times, with the last move to 1712 Laguna Street. He ran the shop until his retirement three years ago.

NICHI BEI BUSSAN

Holding the distinction of being one of the longest-running Japanese businesses in the city, Nichi Bei Bussan opened in 1902 on what is today Grant Avenue. Old-timers fondly remember it as Dupont Street.

Shojiro Tatsuno would see his dry goods store through many hardships, the first of which was the 1906 earthquake. The fire of that fateful day turned most of the city, including Tatsuno's store, to ashes.

Nichi Bei Bussan, or "NB" as it is affectionately called, made a couple of moves before settling into its Japantown home on the southwest corner of Post and Buchanan. The Tatsuno family lived on Buchanan, just a short jump from the shop.

Shojiro held an evacuation sale a few weeks before his forced removal to Topaz. After the war, the family moved back to their Buchanan Street home, which now doubled as a place of business.

In 1948, the family decided to expand their operations and opened a branch of the store in San Jose's Japantown.

In San Francisco, under the

first phase of redevelopment, Nichi Bei Bussan moved north on Buchanan. With the second phase, they moved again, this time across the street to its present location, where they continue to serve community folks and tourists alike.

JAPAN-AMERICA EMPLOYMENT AGENCY KINOKUNIYA HOTEL POOL HALL

Jennosuke and Taki Shiozaki were operating businesses in the South Park section of the city before moving their operations to Japantown in the 1920s. The couple ran the Japan-America Employment Agency, the Kinokuniya Hotel and a pool hall, all congregated in one location on Buchanan Street.

The businesses closed when evacuation orders came through. As the Issei could not own property then, the building was listed under son, Yoshio Edward. "During the war," said another son, Takio, "we rented out the building to a Filipino family."

In the latter part of 1945, the family reopened the employment agency and the pool hall, but the hotel's doors remained closed. After Jennosuke's death, Taki and her three sons continued to run the businesses until the redevelopment process began in the early 1960s.

NIPPON GOLD FISH

Tagayasu Murata opened Nippon Gold Fish in 1911 on the corner of Sutter and Buchanan. In 1935, it was at its second location at 1919-1921 Bush St. The family first rented, then owned the property, where they had a retail store and a shop where they built aquariums.

Evacuation closed the doors of their business, but following the war, they reopened at the same location with Tagayasu now retired and son Koji and daughter-in-law Mary taking over.

In the 1960s, redevelopment saw Nippon Gold Fish find a new location in the Richmond District, where it continues today. Koji retired in the late '70s, and the business is now in the hands of third-generation Muratas, sons Ernest and Stephen.

NIPPON DRUGS

Nippon Drugs was started in the late '20s by Hatsuoto "Jim" Yamada. During the evacuation, he sold the store, recalled his son Min. The family was interned at Topaz. Hatsuoto left the camp in 1943 to work at a mail-order house in Chicago.

After the war, the family moved back to Japantown and started a drug store at the corner of Sutter and Laguna. "He couldn't very well call it 'Nippon Drugs' back in 1945," said Min, so it was renamed Jim's Drugs. The drug store is now run by brothers Min and Kan and is located in the Japan Center.

NANKAIYA HOTEL & APT.

The Nankaiya Hotel & Apartment was originally owned by Sento Fukushima, according to his daughter, Yoneko Suehiro. The 42-room building was actually three houses joined together and was converted to a hotel/apartment building shortly after the 1906 earthquake.

Fukushima sold the business in 1930 to Heitaro Hirano, who hailed from the city of Wakano, Wakayama Prefecture. Hirano operated the hotel until the evacuation. After the war, he started a travel agency on Post Street.

OMIYA HOTEL & GROCERY STORE

Shokichi Morino started his business in South Park on Third and Bryant around 1912, according to his son Ginzo "Babe" Morino. The business moved to its Japantown location on Sutter Street, where the Kyoto Inn is today, in 1934.

When the war broke out, the family moved from San Francisco, which was in restricted zone A, to Lodi, which was in restricted zone B. But the government "caught up with the B group and put them all in an assembly center in Stockton," recalled Morino. The family was then sent to the Rohrer camp in Arkansas.

The family still owned the three-story building, and Ginzo, while on emergency furlough from the service, "tried to store most of the stuff in one of the rooms." But someone later

See Before and Beyond
(Continued on page 6)

By KAREN TEI
YAMASHITA

My grandparents, Tei and Kitaichi Sakai, opened a small grocery store on Post Street in San Francisco sometime after the great earthquake at the beginning of this century.

They lived above the store and raised nine children in one of those old Victorian houses that was carted away several years ago.

I have fond memories of that old house with its high ceilings, long staircases and curling banister, the tall mirrors framed in bronze Grecian women with flowing hair and cornucopias and the matching fireplace, which was always stoked with coal and a glowing fire.

In that same setting were teak cabinetry filled with Japanese dolls, dishes and bibelots, *butsudan*, Japanese *kakejiku* and prints on the walls, low-hanging Japanese lanterns for light, Japanese pillows and magazines and my grandmother's endless handiwork in the form of crocheted blankets.

And there was that unforgettable smell of her house, something indescribable. I think of it as being a mixture of coffee and toast and *shoyu*.

Some summers when we visited San Francisco, I got to sleep with my grandmother in her big bouncy bed surrounded by photographs of all her grandchildren and my aunts and uncles in all their wedding and family pictures.

Through her bedroom windows, I could hear the sounds of night life drifting up from the small bars across Post Street and the very early morning sounds of trucks pulling up to the grocery store below to deliver their produce.

My grandmother woke long before anyone else to her early morning bath, to light the fireplace and a stick of incense for the spirit of my grandfather, and to put the coffee on.

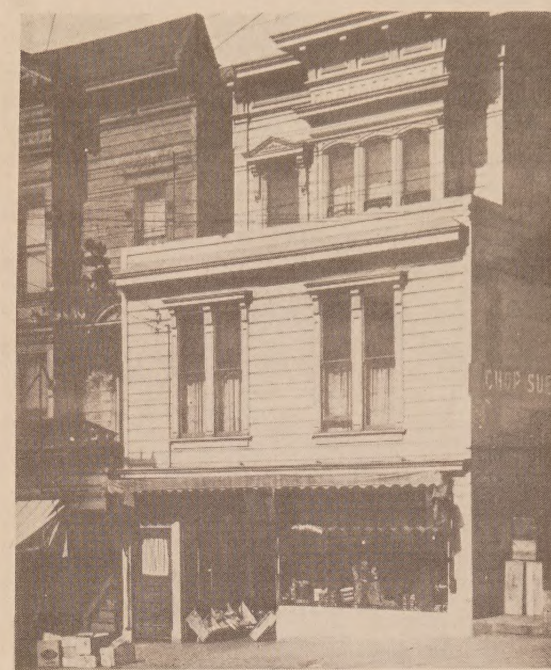
By the time I wandered down to find my grandmother busily crocheting another blanket, my uncles and aunts, who by now ran the grocery business, had probably all been through the kitchen and had started their busy day downstairs.

I would follow my grandmother out the back kitchen door and downstairs to the tiny grocery, small narrow rows of shelves stuffed with Japanese canned and dried goods, *sembai* of every variety, fresh produce, fish and seafood and *tofu*.

My Auntie Chiyeko might be behind the fish counter, always smiling cheerfully, while Uncle Eiji showed me the tentacles of a slimy octopus and my older cousins bustled in and out, stacking and filling shelves.

I would wind around the busy commotion after my grandmother to the cereals, where she'd remove the one I liked, then

Post Street



The Uoki grocery store around 1935. It was started by Tei and Kitaichi Sakai and is still run by that family.

pick up some bread and milk for my breakfast. She might even pick out the instant *ochazuke* mix she knew I loved.

By the time I knew my grandmother, she was a widow in her eighties, bent and worn. Her thinning white hair was neatly bound in a tiny bun at the back of her head. She had the protruding chin and lips that have always marked the members of our family.

She had a low, whimsical laugh to go with what I always supposed was her natural wisdom about life and her bemused sense of humor. Obaachan had seen everything; people were like that. Life had plans for us that we might never predict.

She spoke very little English and was always saying in Japanese that we were good children. All of her grandchildren were *ikko*. So there I was at breakfast on Post Street, contentedly eating a bowl of cereal, followed by one of *ochazuke*, and Obaachan would be saying, "Ii ko ne, Ii ko ne."

Now she is gone, but when we get together as a big clan, I always remember Obaachan and that we are, every one of us, good children.

I have sometimes speculated what it must have been like to grow up in that Victorian house over a grocery on Post Street in a small Japanese American community before the war.

During the week, there was the bustle of nine children rushing up and down two flights of stairs and in and out of the kitchen. My grandmother was perpetually in the commotion of

making meals for her big brood and all the store employees who came up for lunch.

My grandfather was busy tending his *moyashi* production or the profusion of rhododendrons and water lilies he had growing on the upstairs balcony. The older children were already working in the store while the younger ones were occupied with school.

The youngsters went to Rafael Weill Elementary School, which was named after the owner of the old, no longer existing White House department store.

In those days, the majority of students were Nisei, and classmate Verlin Yamamoto's mother was the perennial PTA president because she was one of the few Issei women who spoke fluent English.

At the sixth grade graduation ceremony, the young graduates, my mother among them, all stood stiffly in a row while the principal, Mrs. Kahn, came by to give each child a farewell kiss.

Every day after school, there was Japanese language school at Kinmon Gakuen around the corner on Bush Street, where Mits Kaneko's mother and Mrs. Suzuki, the wife of the principal, were teachers.

Maybe there were some students who applied themselves diligently to the task of studying the intricacies of Japanese characters and, then again, maybe there were those who didn't.

On Saturdays, my uncles wandered over to the YMCA on Buchanan to play basketball. They would all have known kind Mr. Tomizawa, the YMCA sec-

retary. And my mother and her sisters went down to the YWCA on Sutter, where Kimi Mukai and vivacious Toshi Koba ran the program. In those days, the Y's were run by and for the J-Town community.

The girls joined the Girl Reserves and became Little Echoes or Silver Echoes or maybe even Golden Echoes. In the summers they went for weekends to Asilomar in Pacific Grove for the YWCA conferences or participated in the yearly benefit plays — acting, painting scenery or sewing costumes. On special occasions, the girls dressed up for the YW socials and teas.

On Sunday, some members of the family went to the Reform Church or met friends and strolled all the way to the marina and back. Or they took the streetcar to Golden Gate Park and rented bicycles. And there was a stream of Sunday visitors who came to the house to talk and gossip and join the family for dinner.

On Sunday night it was always stew, but occasionally my grandfather would prepare something French, very elaborate and swimming in butter. My grandmother put on tea and coffee, and the talk and warmth of a big family filled the rooms and drifted up to those high ceilings.

My grandmother was always there in her big warm kitchen, listening to the stories and problems of others or telling stories of her own about life in Japan, stories about old social conventions and customs, folk tales about the mischievous *tanuki*, a world which seemed so strange and distant. "That's the way it was," my grandmother laughed at my mother's incredulity.

The old Victorian house is gone. The grocery business has since moved to a new location on the same street. My grandparents are gone. The old sounds and smells of Post Street as my mother knew it, and even as I knew it, are all changed.

Many years ago, my mother and her sisters and brothers walked along that street back and forth to school, Japanese school and the Y, while my grandparents labored for the future.

But some things do remain. That special smell of my grandmother's house, that smell of toast and coffee and *shoyu* remains. It is there every morning in my mother's house.

And my grandmother's low, whimsical laughter remains; all the *ikko* know it. It is here with us even now.

Yamashita contributed to last year's New Year's issue and did the translation for the "Nikkei in Brazil" series which ran in the Hokubei Mainichi in 1987. Her performance work "Hannah" is scheduled to be performed by East West Players in Los Angeles this year. She resides in Gardena.

Sojiro Hori was Crazy About People

By KIKU HORI FUNABIKI

In 1908, Sojiro Hori first hung up his shingle to begin a business in America. Hori & Co. Employment Agency, or Hori Keian, as it was affectionately known to the Issei.

He operated the business for 42 years, excluding the period of his incarceration as "prisoner of war" during World War II.

Hori & Co. became a landmark in San Francisco's Japantown, not so much as an employment agency, but as a social service agency, mail and message forwarding office, and a general hangout for Issei, Chinese and Filipino domestics on their days off.

Papa was a people lover. "Hito ga daisuki" (I'm crazy about people), he'd say. Our home above the office saw a constant flow of humanity, from local derelicts to dignitaries from Japan, a few of the latter because of Papa's involvement with the Nihonjinkai (Japanese Association) and his Kenjinkai (Prefectural Association). But his heart belong to the working people.

The indigent were part of our lives long before they became known as the generic "homeless." Through the Depression years we didn't consider ourselves underprivileged since the whole community shared hard times. Of course, some had it worse than others.

Japantown was a close and sharing community then. Often heard from the Issei, "Otogai ni yasukau koto" (We've got to help one another). It was not uncommon to double up with my parents so that a homeless person could seek shelter in our flat until he got back on his feet.

We each helped others in our own way, and it was probably a lifestyle shared in other immi-

grant communities.

Mama cooked for our "guests" and her resourcefulness got us through the lean years. She became an integral part of Hori & Co.'s social services during the economic struggle of the '30s as she prepared low-budget meals recycling scraps and leftovers to serve nutritious and savory dishes.

Mama's resourcefulness extended into the clothing of her children, much to my chagrin at times.

I will never forget a particular coat which she sewed for me. Although it was a beautifully executed princess line garment of maroon wool, it fell unflatteringly on a young girl in her awkward age whose figure was neither that of a child nor an adult.

I wore it constantly, trying to wear it into a frazzle, hoping it would be discarded. Mama, instead, thought I loved her creation. She ripped it apart, turned it inside out, and skillfully whipped up a renovated coat which looked like new — mileage plus! I was delicious when I finally outgrew it.

Papa served young and old. Young students from Japan were placed in Caucasian households, where they did menial chores in exchange for room and board. These youngsters were treated like family and did not escape Papa's wrath when they were out of line.

This extended to Issei bachelors who served as domestics and didn't have the means to send for picture brides from Japan. Some Issei men with no family here had severed ties with relatives in Japan. Papa buried a few of them in their lonely graves. One was killed by a fall while washing windows.

On Thursdays, the domestics' day off, a congregation of Issei



Sojiro Hori (right) in front of his employment agency with partner M. Ueda.

workers would gather at 1725 Post St. to "shoot the breeze" with Papa. He enjoyed this change of pace and would occasionally join them at *go* or *shogi*.

I recall with clarity the doorbell ringing at dawn one day. A middle-aged homeless Caucasian woman who had walked all the way from Los Angeles was at the door seeking employment.

We gave her breakfast and Papa sent her off to work as a domestic.

The human services Papa quietly extended came with the territory. He assumed that people in a community did their share in a family spirit to reach out to those in need. Of the few exceptions who didn't, he would lament, "Ningen o yoshite iru" (They've abandoned the human race).

Papa was not the most organized person. His system of bookkeeping was something only he could decipher. He was also notorious for misplacing items

for which he constantly searched as he muttered invectives.

Once, in disgust, he bought a dozen pairs of reading glasses which sold for 50¢ a pair then at Woolworth's on Fillmore Street. These he placed in strategic areas around the house.

A few years later, when he was down to his last pair, he turned to me one day and said with a twinkle in his eyes, "Kiku-chan, kono megane o gurusu katte kite kurenai ka?" (Kiku, how about getting a gross of these glasses for me?) We both laughed at our private joke. Unfortunately, I have inherited this exasperating trait.

Sojiro's lack of organization did not make him an exemplary businessman. People were his priority. After his death, we found a stack of signed collection contracts, forms on which em-

See Hori & Co.
(Continued on page 6)



The Northeast corner of Post and Buchanan streets as it looked in 1940 (above) and as it does today.

Oakland's Japanese American Community

A Short Story

Educational Opportunities

The following account of the Japanese American community in Oakland is also from the Ethnic Minorities of the San Francisco Bay Area project. Although Dr. Paul Radin oversaw the project, the authorship of this study could not be determined.

FIRST BUSINESSES

Floriculture

Coming from a country where many people were farmers, it is not unnatural that the first Japanese settlers in Oakland became involved in the floriculture industry.

In 1882, Mr. Yoshiike, one of the early Japanese pioneers in Alameda County, established himself in Oakland. He went back to Japan, but returned to America in 1885, bringing his new bride with him.

Though Mr. Yoshiike worked in an American home for a living, his interest in flower-raising led him to grow chrysanthemums in a vacant lot near the house of the family whom he served.

His experiments were evidently successful, for Mr. Yoshiike decided to start his own business on a half-acre plot of land at 16th and Willow streets. There he established a greenhouse, the first of its kind among the Japanese in the area, where he cultivated flowers, primarily chrysanthemums and carnations.

For these efforts, Mr. Yoshiike occupies a prominent place in the history of the Japanese in Alameda County.

In 1884, three brothers of the Domoto family arrived in Oakland. By 1885, the Domotos had enlarged the Japanese floral industry by starting their own nursery at 3rd and Grove streets. Here, in addition to growing carnations and chrysanthemums, they cultivated camellias and wisteria, and, in time, also imported flower and plant varieties from Japan.

General Merchandise Store

According to an older Japanese who came to Oakland in 1892, in addition to these two flourishing enterprises, there was one general merchandise store run by Japanese.

Five Japanese students who wanted to work their way through school decided they would prefer doing something other than the usual "schoolboy" work in American homes. As a result, they opened a store — Fuji Company — on Washington Street, selling only bamboo works at first, and later adding other Japanese art goods.

By 1902, the Fuji Company had developed into a large store, and included among its merchandise Japanese foods and necessary ingredients for Japanese cooking.

THE FORMATION OF THE OAKLAND JAPANESE AMERICAN COMMUNITY

By 1892, a Japanese church had already been organized. It was known as the M.E. Mission, located on 5th and Bush streets. At the arrival of every and any Japanese at an Oakland station, Negro porters ushered them immediately and directly to the Mission as a haven where assistance of all kinds was offered to Japanese newcomers.

Although there was an all-Japanese club as early as 1892, it was not until 1898 that a true gathering place or meeting center for the Japanese was established. This took the form of a combined poolroom, grocery, and barber shop.

1898 also marks the beginning of the Japanese American community in Oakland.

Hori & Co.

(Continued from page 5)

employees agreed to pay 10 percent of their first month's salary — his income. Obviously, those fees were never collected.

Twenty or so years after Papa was gone, I was approached one day by an elderly Filipino man who asked, "Aren't you the daughter of Meestair Hori who had the employment agency?"

"Yes," I replied with surprise to the stranger.

"Oh, I miss yurr Papa very much," he intoned in his thick accent, his eyes beginning to glisten with tears.

This elderly stranger tugged at my heartstrings. My throat constricted and I could only grasp his hand in silence. No monument to Papa could match the one in this old man's heart.

Funabiki is an organizer of Miles to Go, a fitness program for Nisei based in San Francisco's Japantown.



Market Laundry, located at 718-730 Myrtle St. in Oakland, circa 1910

nings of the rise of numerous business undertakings by the Japanese. Barber shops, employment agencies, and groceries sprang up, catering to local Japanese patronage.

Other trades, such as bath houses, cobbling, tailoring, and restaurant business undertakings, were established. All of these businesses sought American as well as Japanese customers.

Issei cobblers did a flourishing trade, for at that time cobbling was all a matter of handwork. Japanese were known to do the best and most skillful work. Cobblers thus stood first in point of number, and in due time they formed an all-California union.

With the advent of the repairing machine, however, the Japanese shoe repairman's skill in handiwork lost its advantage. There was a subsequent decline in the importance and number of Issei cobblers.

The Japanese Association

In 1900, an incident occurred in Oakland which led to the organization of the Japanese Association.

A Japanese man was found dead in the street, with no relatives or friends to claim his body or to arrange a proper burial. The realization that similar accidents might recur resulted in the formation of a mutual-benefit fraternal organization. This, in turn, evolved into what is known as the Japanese Association.

The purpose of the association is to keep records pertaining to the Japanese in the community (for such an association is found in every district wherein there is a large Japanese population), and to interest itself in the general welfare of the Japanese.

The organization of similar service clubs on a smaller scale soon followed. The members of each of these were bound together because they came from the same prefecture in Japan.

Churches

The development of churches and language schools also constitute an important phase in the history of the Japanese.

In 1903, a disagreement among the members of the M.E. Mission resulted in its division. One-third of the original congregation remained with the Mission; another third formed a Buddhist Church, and the last third organized a Congregational Church.

In 1905, the M.E. Church South was added to this number of religious associations, as well as a Unitarian Church. The latter church lasted for only a year, however.

Language Schools

About the same time, in 1904, to be exact, a Japanese language school — the first in the county — had its beginning in the Buddhist Church. Both Buddhist and Christian children had been attending this school.

Difficulties arose with the predominance of Christian members. Such difficulties were resolved with the formation, in 1916, of the Oakland Japanese Language School, as well as a similar school in the M.E. Church.

Later, the Oakland Japanese Language School came to be known as the East Bay Language School, and underwent yet another split, with one part of the organization transplanted into the Buddhist Church.

The Japanese Business Men's Association

Among other important events in the history of the Japanese in this district was the organization of the Japanese Business Men's Association in 1906. This organization went into recess after two years of existence, but resumed its activity in 1915, boosted by the Pan-Pacific Exposition in San Francisco that year.

The Pacific Printing Company

In 1906, another business enterprise made its beginning: namely, the Pacific Printing Company. This company arose out of the need for some company in the East Bay to do printing work in the Japanese language.

Recently, though, this company experienced a change of management and is now operated under the name of the Wanto Press (East Bay Press).

In 1907, the Empire Printing Company was established and offered competition.

The Japanese Immigrant Press

The year 1904 is significant in marking the date of the establishment in Oakland of branch offices of the Japanese American News, the New World Daily, and the San Francisco News, all daily journals with main offices in San Francisco.

This step is important and interesting as an indication of the growing number and importance of Japanese residents outside of San Francisco, necessitating the creation of these branch offices.

A weekly called The Nation also existed at the time, but along with the San Francisco News mentioned above, it had only a two-year duration.

In recent times, a third daily newspaper, the North American Morning Sun, appeared, but a year or so ago — because three dailies were unnecessary to serve the limited Japanese reading public — it merged with the New World Daily into the New World Sun Daily.

In addition to these organs reporting events and facts of the Japanese American community and of the world at large, a weekly called The North Star was started in 1913.

The North Star is a sort of critical review, criticizing and

commenting on events, rather than merely offering factual information. It continued until 1926, a few years after the death of its original founder.

In 1927, the co-editor of this weekly began editing and publishing a similar critical journal called The North American Review.

THE 1906 EARTHQUAKE

In 1906, the San Francisco earthquake and fire led many Japanese to make their homes in Oakland.

The two important Japanese daily newspapers named above, the Japanese American News and the New World Daily, transferred their headquarters to Oakland for about a year, returning to San Francisco at the end of that time, when the city had been partially rebuilt.

As was natural, this influx of San Francisco Issei into Oakland was a great boon to the trades and various business concerns of the Japanese in that city.

In fact, in 1907, two banks were organized — the Commercial Savings Bank and the Nippon Bank — to accommodate the many Japanese temporarily residing in Oakland.

In 1909, both of these banks closed due to the return of many Japanese people to San Francisco. Since then, there has been no bank owned or operated by the Japanese in the East Bay for their compatriots.

DISTRIBUTION OF THE JAPANESE IN THE LABOR FORCE OF OAKLAND

As for the present, the following is a general summary of the principal occupations of the Japanese in Oakland: (1) housework and cooking in American homes; (2) gardening, which has developed since about 1925; (3) laundries; (4) nurseries; (5) shoe repairing; (6) tailoring; and (7) grocery stores.

It should be noted that laundries and nurseries are the Japanese business enterprises with the greatest capital, while tailoring and nurseries are important in terms of the volume of business they do.

The grocery business has become the most important trade of the Japanese since a few years ago. Many Japanese own the fruit and vegetable sections of large American markets, and a few are proprietors of markets in their own right.

Before and Beyond

(Continued from page 5)

"broke in and took everything."

In 1946, Ginzo and his brothers George and Ken reopened the business, this time as a grocery store only. The hotel space was needed to put up relatives, Morino explained. The business was forced to close about 20 years ago because of redevelopment; the building was demolished.

After leaving the grocery business in 1963, Ginzo took over the Evergreen Fountain on Buchanan Street for about eight years.

MASUICHI HIGAKI, DDS

Dr. Masuichi Higaki had his dental practice on Buchanan Street for about 30 years altogether, according to his daughter-in-law, Toshiko Higaki. During the war, the family was interned at Amache in Colorado. Dr. Higaki re-established his practice after the war and worked there until his death in

1950.

ITATANI JEWELRY

The Itatani family, which ran a jewelry store on Post Street, continued its business after the war in both San Francisco and Los Angeles. Two of Ichiro Itatani's sons, Motoo and Masayoshi, became optometrists, while the other son, Harold, became a jeweler.

Motoo's daughter, Katherine Hata of Los Angeles, recalled that when the Itatanis were interned at Tanforan, her father and his family were sent to Heart Mountain, "with an FBI man," because an optometrist was needed there. Harold, Masayoshi and their families were sent to Manzanar.

After the war, Motoo established his business on Buchanan between Post and Sutter, within the Soko Hardware building. His daughter Katherine, also an optometrist, practiced with him in the early 1950s. He died seven years ago.

Ichiro accompanied his other two sons to Los Angeles, where

By HISAYE YAMAMOTO DESOTO

Anne Miura was walking home all right, but it was as though someone out there somewhere was turning the dials or pushing the buttons that moved her.

Usually Anne headed home from these Christmas programs at school with her mind's voice singing one carol or another: *O holy night... Fall on your knees! O hear the angel voices!*

Anne had never once gone to public school and that now in middle age she was what might be described as a quasi-Christian who accepted all faiths — invariably the music touched off sympathetic chords deep down inside her.

The kindergarten teachers enchanted her the most. The sweetness, the innocence in their faces, even though the music they produced was the feeblest. By the first grade, according to Anne's perceptions, some were already beginning to look — well, not corrupt exactly, but shrewd, as though they'd already begun to learn some of the deviousness necessary for survival.

The second-graders were infinitely lovable again, gap-toothed and self-conscious. After that, it was downhill all the way; they were well on their way to adulthood.

The younger classes got to lighten up the proceedings with pieces like "Rudolph the Red-nosed Reindeer" or "I Saw Mommy Kissing Santa Claus." Then there was the obligatory Spanish, "Silent Night" this time, and there was for the first time a nod to Hanukkah with "My Dreidl." (The Jehovah's Witness kids were excused from attending.)

The sixth-graders were given songs that were much more sophisticated than the ones Anne remembered from school. No more "O Little Town of Bethlehem" or "It Came Upon a Midnight Clear." They boomed out "The Drummer Boy" and "The Twelve Days of Christmas" with great verve.

But Anne had found no tidings of comfort and joy this afternoon, only shock and disbelief.

She scarcely paid attention when her twins, Todd and Kevin, came filing out with the other fifth-graders to sing "God Rest Ye, Merry Gentlemen," which she had sung along with them when they practiced at home.

Anne was intent only on observing the young male teacher of the fourth grade who evidently doubled as the music coach. It was not possible, but there he was, leading the special chorus and conducting the orchestra.

Weren't his arm and hand movements a shade too delicate? Weren't his fingers too long, his wrists too slender? Or was prejudice contaminating her imagination?

Because this teacher was the same young man of several years ago who had come to the Miura house in answer to an ad that Anne's husband Joe had put in the area throwaway, trying to sell a motorcycle. He was a nice-looking fellow, brown hair, white smile. Mary had overheard him when he was talking to Joe outside before they went into the double garage together to check out the cycle.

His name, he had said, was Charles Hudachek. He was getting ready to leave the Marines, so he was looking for some cheap transportation until he got situated. That was his father's car he was driving, he explained, pointing toward the street.

Mostly Anne thought that he was certainly a friendly guy for

someone who had just come to look over a chopper.

Their oldest son Peter had been out in the garage, too. He was always helping his dad keep the family motorcycles running. The Miuras had three sons, with a 10-year gap between Peter and the twins, who were kind of an October surprise. They each had motorcycles then, which they piled onto the truck when they took off for a day of riding out at El Mirage Dry Lake, sandwiches and cold drinks in the Coleman cooler.

Anne had never once gone with them. She hated motorcycles. She would tell herself that she was going to catch up on her reading while they were gone, hurrah, but there was always a disquieting undercurrent to her day while they were out there roaring about the desert, tearing up the environment. At that time, they'd already sustained a broken ankle, a broken arm, a mashed finger, so their hobby had kept her on tenterhooks.

There was an extra motorcycle because Joe had just acquired a larger bike to replace the 90 he'd been using. The twins each had Honda 70's. The young Marine looked the yellow Yamahava over and decided no, he wanted something bigger, maybe more like the red 250 Kawasaki there. So Joe had come back inside, where Anne was putting some stew together for dinner. He'd settled into his recliner for a spot of TV news.

All of a sudden, when dinner was about ready, Peter burst in through the kitchen door. He was agitated, obviously; he was breathing hard and his face looked green.

"I think that guy's a queer," he said in a tight voice.

It seemed Peter had asked him something about life in the Marines, so they had gone to the guy's car together and sat in it chatting a while. Charles Hudachek had told him he intended to get his own apartment as soon as he got his discharge, and he invited Peter to come live with him.

He was taken aback, Peter said, because the guy seemed to take it for granted that he wanted to leave home.

Then when Peter excused himself, saying he had to go finish working on his bike, the fellow had followed him back to the garage. He asked Peter if he'd done any wrestling, and before you knew it, he'd pulled down the garage door and grabbed Peter in some kind of lock so that Peter found himself flat on the cement floor.

Then the guy got on top of him and Peter, scared out of his wits, let out a yelp and pretended his back had been hurt. So the guy let him up. After a hasty pleasantries or two, the guy finally left.

Anne knew Joe had heard some of this from the living room, so she went over to the doorway and looked at him. The TV was still on, but now he was hiding behind the newspaper, pretending to read it.

So what was there to say to a son who was shaking with fear and indignation? At dinner, they talked about homosexuality. Anne mentioned people like Proust and Tchaikovsky. Todd and Kevin, engaged in some furtive debate of their own, didn't even seem to be listening. Peter didn't have much of an appetite, even when she brought out his favorite lemon meringue pie for dessert. *My son, my son...*

But Charles Hudachek never came back, so that was a relief. Now — ta-daah! — here he was again several years later, teaching in the very school the twins attended. So Anne was walking home from the Christmas program feeling as though she had been kicked in the stomach. She almost stumbled over the buckled places in the sidewalk all the way home, although she was familiar with each and every hump and crack caused by the overgrown carob trees.

Evidently Charles Hudachek had done well for himself. He had probably gone on to college on the GI bill, Anne surmised. He'd studied music on the side and gotten his teaching credentials. She checked the green mimeographed paper in her hand — Charles Hudachek, that was his name on the Christmas program, all right.

By the time Anne traversed the several blocks home, reason began to creep in and disperse her distress. Maybe he's turned his life around, she speculated, maybe he no longer has those proclivities.

But, as the school term went on, Anne began to hear snippets of news that made her uneasy.

A neighbor down the street said that her son was in Mr. Hudachek's class, and what a remarkable teacher he was. The

neighbor had heard that after school Mr. Hudachek even drove over to the local junior high school to provide transportation home for boys who might otherwise have to walk.

"Isn't that wonderful?" asked the neighbor. "You don't often find dedication like that."

Anne had only nodded, beginning to feel the same disquiet that had rattled her at the Christmas program.

It was unusual, she thought. Other teachers she'd noticed were relieved when the school day was over. They couldn't wait for that closing bell to ring, so they could go home and let their hair down.

As one of the kindergarten teachers once complained to her, "Some of these children have serious problems at home, and they bring the problems to school with them. They disrupt the whole class." Anne still could see in her mind the child nearby who had occasioned that confidence: a pretty, fair-haired little girl in wrinkled, soiled clothing and beat-up tennies who looked

class still standing in line while Mr. Hudachek, obviously furious, was walking up and down, deriding their misplaced sense of honor. This seemed to her rather perverse, but she decided that she was letting other factors color her impression.

Then her neighbor Wanda called up to chat one morning and told her what good grades her son Billy was getting in Mr. Hudachek's class this year. She said Mr. Hudachek, on his own, had been taking groups of boys from his class camping on weekends in his own motorhome. They stayed overnight in one or another of those wooded campgrounds along Angeles Crest Highway. Her son Billy, Wanda said, was certainly among the lucky ones this year.

Anne must have snorted or otherwise allowed some doubt to infect her voice. "What's the matter? Don't you think that's a wonderful thing for a teacher to do?"

Anne managed a grunt. Then she couldn't help adding, "Just be careful, Wanda." She had no

What was there to say to a son who was shaking with fear and indignation?

as though she hadn't bathed in a while.

Teaching these days was another ball of wax, she supposed. She remembered visiting Peter's high school a few years back. She had been horrified to see knee-deep trash filling the whole lunch area, with some of the stairways in the main building smeared with food — pudding cups, Twinkies, whole bananas, ice cream and such.

She couldn't believe the disorder in the girls' restroom, the cigarette box in the toilet, the burns on the seat, the paper towels plugging up the wash basins and overflowing the swing-lid trash container, the flooded floor. And this was a school in a middle-class residential community which was mostly white.

Anne recalled the teachers of her childhood. They were authority figures then, aloof and demanding of respect. Nowadays, she noticed, they were so laid back, some of them. She'd heard of one diabetic woman teacher demonstrating to the small charges just how she administered her own insulin shots. She heard of another, long widowed, weeping silently in the rear of the classroom after the children sang a verse of "What Child Is This?"

Peter, when he was in high school, had once come home perturbed about a coach he'd overheard "ordering" a stereo from a student of his who was known to be light-fingered; the coach had taken the student to his car to show him exactly where the stereo had to fit.

He'd also been upset because they'd gotten a new shop teacher who was Black, and most of his classmates kept referring to the man as "the nigger" behind his back.

Then there was the case of Mr. Chang, the young Chinese American teacher on his first school assignment, who struggled through a semester or so. When Anne had once had occasion to speak with him, he seemed relieved to confide in a fellow Asian. "Boy, some of these white parents — they come charging in here like bulls!"

But she also remembered meeting a young Chinese American woman at the supermarket who said she had just had her son transferred to another school because the same Mr. Chang was "terrible."

Well, one day, or so the story went, the principal had come to Mr. Chang's second-grade room and found the place in an uproar. The wilder element had completely taken over; desks had been shoved hither and yon, a couple overturned; papers and books strewn the floor; a couple of the boys were jumping from desk top to desk top.

Mr. Chang was watching all the goings-on from his desk with a large smile. The smile seemed to say that there were plenty of other ways to make a living. He did not return after that memorable day.

The following year, Mr. Hudachek was still at the school. Once, going in for one of the recommended parent-teacher conferences, Anne saw Mr. Hudachek with his class lined up outside the door of the classroom. He had apparently kept them there for some time, while waiting for a piece of information. He was refusing to let the children pass into the room until the culprit confessed or an informer came forward.

When Anne emerged from the twins' room after her conference with their teacher, she saw the

proof of any wrongdoing, but something was telling her she should be running out there with a big red flag.

But on what pretext? When she tried to discuss it with Joe, he only got uncomfortable. "Now, you're blowing things up out of proportion," he said.

"Our own son is the one who told us what happened to him," Anne insisted. "Do you think he would lie about such a thing?"

Joe shrugged. "Well, he didn't make any moves on me."

"I don't think he's interested in middle-aged men, dear. He prefers young boys." Angry over his intransigence, she couldn't help the dig.

And just what was it with him anyway, this denial? Could it be perhaps that he was trying to prevent a painful memory of his own from breaking to the surface?

But she realized that if her own husband wouldn't back her up, she wouldn't have much luck going to the school authorities. What proof could she produce to back up her insinuations?

On top of that, as a Japanese she had learned life was more tranquil when one didn't rock the boat. Her own kids had come home indignantly on occasion after having been called Chink and Dirty Jap and Pearl Harbor. She had instructed them to ignore such taunts.

"There's never going to be a world free of prejudice of one kind or another," she had said. "Just so you know your own worth, that's the main thing."

And she also saw now that it hadn't been fair to bring Tchaikovsky and Proust into the matter. The one to cite was Gide, the Nobelist with his Christian excuse, *Si le grain ne meurt...* The Tunisian gamins later counting their dinars? He himself was the one to make the distinction clear. I am not homosexual, he wrote, *je suis pederaste*.

Early one Saturday morning Wanda called and wanted to know if Billy was around. "Yeah, he's with the twins, playing that Stratomatic baseball game, I think."

"That kid! He must have forgotten. Will you tell him Mr. Hudachek is here to take him camping?"

Anne called Billy to the phone so he could hear for himself. He was a handsome boy with blonde hair and blue eyes like his German father.

Anne could tell from what he was saying that Wanda was trying to get him to come home. "No, you tell him, Mom," he said. "I'm in the middle of a game."

Finally he shouted, "I don't wanna go!" and hung up.

After a bit, Wanda came over to fetch him. "You don't hang up on me, young man!" she fumed, propelling him toward the door.

"I told you over and over I don't wanna go camping!"

"He was waiting for you! Well, he's gone now. He had other boys to pick up. He said maybe next time."

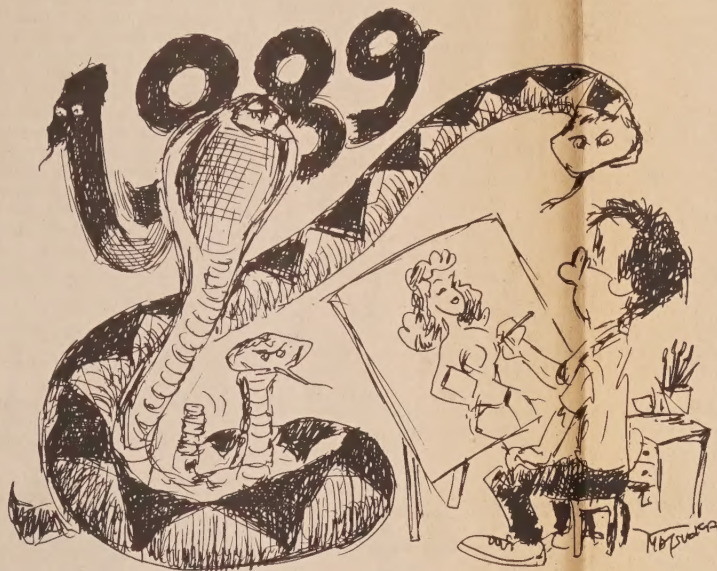
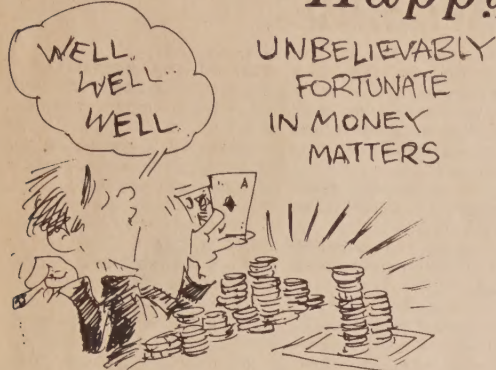
A week or so later, Mr. Hudachek was suddenly arrested. The charge was child molestation, with over a dozen separate abuses listed. Everyone was shocked.

It seemed that one of Mr. Hudachek's little campers had been acting strangely at home, listless, no appetite, nightmares, very reluctant to go to school. When his mother solicitously tried to pinpoint his ailment, he burst into tears and

See Educational (Continued on page 7)

Happy New Year!

From Jack Matsuoka

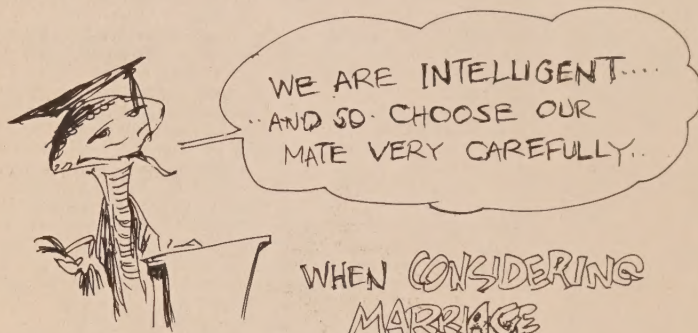


YEAR OF THE SNAKE

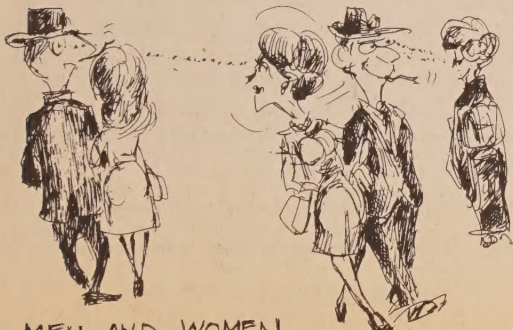
THOSE BORN IN THE YEAR OF THE SNAKE ARE "BEAUTIFUL PEOPLE". NEVER LET THE APPEARANCE FOOL YOU.



THEY CAN BE REAL TIGHT WHEN APPROACHED FOR A "LOAN"... BUT CAN BE MORE THAN GENEROUS WHEN THEY BECOME SYMPATHETIC TO YOUR FINANCIAL SITUATION.



FOPPISH... OVERLY DRESSY... A DANDY



BUT THEY TEND TO HAVE "AFFECTIONS" OUTSIDE THEIR FAMILY... RESULTING IN "LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT" TO MARITAL TROUBLES.



Educational

(Continued from page 6)

blurted out the details of the unusual rituals to which he had been subjected on the weekend camping trips. Aghast, she called the other mothers, doctors were visited, and the whole story came out.

Peter read of it in the newspaper and immediately phoned home. He was living out in North Hollywood now with a fetching young woman. Both were working and attending classes at Cal State Northridge.

"Mom, did you read what happened?" he demanded.

"Yup," Anne heard the accusation in his voice.

"You knew all along he was teaching there? Why didn't you tell me?"

"Why, what would that have done?"

"I don't know — but you should have told me."

"Would you have gone to the principal with me?"

Silence, then, "I guess not."

"So it would have been a witch hunt, right? What if he had changed?"

"But he didn't change, did he? He shouldn't have been allowed to teach!"

"I know that. But what then?"

"I know that. But what then?"

"I know that. But what then?"

"I know that. But what then?"

"I know that. But what then?"

"I know that. But what then?"

"I know that. But what then?"

"I know that. But what then?"

"I know that. But what then?"

"I know that. But what then?"

"I know that. But what then?"

"I know that. But what then?"

"I know that. But what then?"

"I know that. But what then?"

"I know that. But what then?"

"I know that. But what then?"

"I know that. But what then?"

"I know that. But what then?"

"I know that. But what then?"

"I know that. But what then?"

"I know that. But what then?"

"I know that. But what then?"

"I know that. But what then?"

been pretty desperate to do a thing like that..."

Even as he tried to be adult about the matter, Anne saw how deep the wounds were that had been inflicted. Peter and the young boys, she knew, would bear these vivid marks as long as they lived, with repercussion on their issue.

The twist in the psyche that made for a Charles Hudachek — she could only conclude that there was diabolism at work (and if there was diabolism, she couldn't help thinking, was there not God?).

Mr. Hudachek was given a very light sentence, 90 days in the county jail. After due consideration, most of the mothers wouldn't allow their boys to testify in court; they felt the children had suffered enough already.

Some time later, a friend of Peter's dropped in to say hello to the Miuras. He said he was in the area. Among his this and that, he said he had sighted Mr. Hudachek at a local Italian restaurant. Pretending to need a visit to the restroom, he said, he had walked by Mr. Hudachek's table and said, sotto voce, "Child molester..."

"He didn't look around, but I could tell he was shook up. When I got back from the restroom, he was gone."

After the young man left, Anne, going about her chores, sighed from time to time, knowing that Charles Hudachek was

out there somewhere, looking over the field.

Yamamoto's short stories, including one published in last year's Hokubei Mainichi holiday issue, have been published in Seventeen Syllables and Other Stories (Kitchen Table: Women of Color Press, Latham, N.Y.). She is a 1986 recipient of the American Book Award for Lifetime Achievement from the Before Columbus Foundation. Her works have appeared in literary publications, Japanese American community newspapers, and anthologies of Asian American and minority literature.

Credits and Acknowledgements

"A Walk Through Japantown" appears courtesy of Mrs. Paul Radin. The material was prepared by Lane and James Hirabayashi and Mary Sacharoff-Fast Wolf.

Supplementary research was primarily done by Seizo Oka of the Japanese American History Room and Patty Wada.

Special thanks to the Hokubei Mainichi's Shigeo Yoshitsugu

and Yoshitomi Fukushima for allowing us to tap their memories of 50 years ago.

The map was designed by Patty Wada and produced by Julia Matisoo of Matisoo Editorial Services.

"Before and Beyond" was written by Robert Tokunaga, Patty Wada and J.K. Yamamoto. Special thanks to the following people for helping us with leads on the various businesses:

Fusako Shimizu and Yoneko Suehiro of the Hokubei Mainichi; the Kataoka family of Aki Travel; Motomu Ishii; Kaoru Okubo; Dr. Donald Nakahata; Shiro Suenaga; Uta Hirota; Mas Ashizawa; Min Yamada; Mike Wakasa; Sharon Tani; Mary Shimamoto; Shoroku Ono; Eiko Ono; Mary Morino; and Juro Hosoda.

As recreating Japantown of 1935 involved a certain degree of guesswork, we encourage readers to write to us at 1746 Post St., San Francisco, CA 94115 to give us corrections or additions.

Nikkei Gridiron Greats



HOLIDAY GREETINGS!

AZUMAYA, INC.

Tofu, Oriental Pasta

MIZONO BROS.

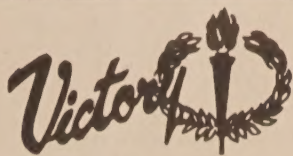
1575 Burke Ave., San Francisco, CA 94124

TEL: (415) 285-8500

Mother Ely

TAROT & ESP READINGS

Tarot cards and ESP readings. One free question. Centrally located. Call Mother Ely at (415) 386-9064.



TROPHIES &

House of Plaques

Trophies in stock for all sports
Plaques, ribbons, executive gifts

Expert engraving • Bowling apparel

2356 Fruitridge Rd.
Sacramento, CA 95822
(916) 421-0328

TOKO FUJII

SAYOKO FUJII

Best Wishes for a Happy Holiday Season



JAPANESE AMERICAN CITIZENS LEAGUE

NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

1765 Sutter Street

San Francisco, CA 94115

(415) 921-JACL

Our Very Best Wishes for a Happy New Year

KABUTOYA GALLERIES

Specializing in fine Japanese prints
contemporary and traditional



Ghirardelli Square
900 Northpoint Street
San Francisco, CA 94109
(415) 776-2800

454 Sutter Street
San Francisco, CA 94108
(415) 434-2777

GREETINGS!

From the Benkyodo Family, we wish to all, a prosperous New Year of 1989!

We will take our traditional New Year Day break, and re-open again from Wednesday, the 4th.

Sincerely yours,

THE BENKYODO CO.
San Francisco, California

A Day to Remember

By TOM ARIMA

Years have passed since that eventful day in Sacramento. I remember it still, vividly, as if it were yesterday.

More than six months had passed since going to my sister's place in Sacramento. I had suffered a physical breakdown, due primarily to worry and over-extending myself in community and church work, and had gone there from Chicago in a wheelchair, leaving my family back in Chicago.

And although I had recovered enough to get out of my wheelchair, I was still unsteady and terribly underweight.

The daily walks and the diet I was put on were strengthening me, and the easy-going lifestyle of my sister and her husband was a tonic. The love and care they gave me was certainly tremendous, speeding me to recovery. Their love, care and concern will never be forgotten.

The existence I led then was serene and peaceful, not harried or pressured like it was in Chicago. It was idyllic. It was the kind of life one could relish, grow fat on. It was lazy and pleasant. It was like being on a perpetual cloud; a long-needed vacation one always wanted, but couldn't really afford.

Perhaps the physical breakdown and the circumstances leading up to it were my body's way of telling me to slow down, to take it easy. But I hadn't listened. Now, it had made itself known in no uncertain terms. And I was cognizant of it and indelibly aware.

My family was writing regularly, especially my wife, but my boys, who were still in their teens, were somewhat sporadic. But they did write. They wrote all about what they were doing, inquiring what I was doing, how I was, when I was coming home, and all those kinds of things families usually ask, chit-chatting about seemingly trivial matters. But then, to me, they were important.

And when they didn't write, they would call, shortening the distance that separated us. But these phone calls, too, were trivial and mundane. Oftentimes I wondered why we couldn't say those words that are so easily said on television or in movies. Yet somehow they were never meant to be.

Getting back to that particular day, I hadn't heard from them for about a week or so and was getting concerned, worried and somewhat depressed. I wondered why they didn't write or call. Were they all right? Were they managing? Had something happened? Were they trying to keep something from me? Some difficulty — a disaster?

Being a worrywart didn't help, that was for sure, but falling into this trap was easy and natural for me, which was part of my problem. Waiting for a phone call or the mailman became an involuntary, debilitating ritual. Each morning, listening for the mailman and

the clang of the mailbox became an obsession.

It was raining slightly that day. I had already gone out to check the mailbox and had come in. Standing by the window looking out, I saw the misty rain falling but didn't really see it, my mind being focused on my family far away.

My sister and her husband had gone shopping. Gazing at the mailbox standing all alone by the curb, thoughts drifted through my mind chaotically like some weird kaleidoscope of blurred shapes and shadows. It was self-pity, of course, but it was warm and soothing.

Relishing the feeling for quite some time, it became quite evident, even to me, that the hole — or shall I say the pit — of self-pity was getting deeper and deeper.

Deliberately trying to snap out of it, yet still wanting to capture the warm, familiar feeling I felt, I took out my small notepad from my shirt pocket and wrote:

In misty spring rain
A mailbox stand, gray and wet
... and again empty

Walking to my room, the down feeling still persisted, permeating my thoughts. The feeling was unwanted now, but it had imprisoned my mind like some huge, hulking warden. Sitting on my bed, the colorful printed walls became hazy; clouded and veiled by my gloom. It seemed as if a conspiracy were in the offing, and words began to well of themselves:

Spring sun is breaking
But here in my lonely room
Clouds are drifting by ...

Looking out, in the far corner of the yard, I saw a bush standing all by itself, and wrote:

A thin dying bush
So forgotten now, not even
The wind touches it ...

Trying to free myself of these depressing thoughts I left the room and went to the front door. But to no avail. The depressing

thoughts followed:

Melancholy spring
I lean against the door-jamb
And listen to the rain ...

The gloom was feeding upon itself. Consuming everything. Devouring everything. It seemed insatiable and couldn't be stopped.

That afternoon a friend called. He suggested going up to Nimbus Dam, which was several miles northeast of Sacramento. It was a refreshing change of pace, and the rain had stopped, so we all decided to go: my sister, her husband, the friend and I.

The trip in itself was uneventful, but fun. It was filled with the chit-chat and laughter that is born only among people who are comfortable and at one with each other.

Nimbus Dam was wholesome and a wonderment: a scenic place with a river far below with a series of small concrete pools, each higher than the next, leading up like steps from the river to a large pond on top, where the salmon were kept. The pond was called, if I remember correctly, the spawning pond.

From the railing where we stood, we could see the salmon leaping the rapids far below, coming ever closer to the awesome concrete "ladder" they were soon to climb.

It was an impressive sight. A moving sight. One could feel the innate power of nature driving the salmon onward. The totality, the oneness of all things. The interdependence of all things. The survival of the fittest. The challenge. The test, nature's test, and the poignant drama of struggling — to overcome, to survive, to reproduce.

And too, the significance of obstacles and the need for inlets and lagoons. Bleeding and torn, the salmon rested in the big pond, gulping air heavily after completing their climb. As a memento, I picked up a rock. It was a small rock and it fit easily in my pocket.

That night in my room after everyone had gone to bed, I gazed upon the rock. It reawak-

ened the feelings I had experienced that day at Nimbus Dam. Reliving it, I felt it engulfing me, overwhelming me with an odd sense of awe — of realization. I took out my notepad and wrote:

In the bright sunshine
Salmons climbing their ladder
How they bleed to spawn ...

... and the words came flowing of themselves.

The rock, too, spoke to me of strength, of change and of oneness. I envisioned that it was once a part of a distant mountain, and traveling from place to place, being smoothed and sculpted by forces unknown to itself, it had come to Nimbus Dam — and now to this place, this table, and was resting now, there, temporarily.

It radiated strength and beauty all its own. And it was still changing, imperceptibly perhaps, but changing — resisting, yet flowing with change. Picking it up, I polished it and laid it back on the table next to my bed. I knew I would keep it forever.

The boys had called earlier that evening, making the day complete. Lying in bed, thoughts that drifted through my mind were no longer thoughts of gloom or self-pity, but of challenges, of mountains and rivers, of lagoons and flowers, and of horizons beyond.

Life was a challenge. A magnificent challenge. And obstacles were just tests, tests to grow on:

After the spring rain
A broken mirror in ditch
Glistens in the sun

So thinking, I closed my eyes — and the night drifted into sleep, unfettered and buoyant. It had been an epochal day. Even now, remembering, I feel the imprints of that one momentous day.

Arima writes from El Cerrito.



*"People working together...
and leading...
in Entrepreneurship...
in Pacific Rim Trade...
within corporations...
and in the community..."*

**ASIAN
BUSINESS
LEAGUE**
OF SAN FRANCISCO

166 Geary Street
Suite 804
San Francisco, CA 94108
(415) 788-4664

Radio Days

By GERI HANDA

A time for imagination
Lone Ranger and Tonto
Howdy Doody and Buffalo Bob
The Shadow
And Mystery Theater!

My sister and I would sit around the radio and listen eagerly for the next exciting adventures of our favorite radio play or program. The sound effects tingled our imagination. The galloping hoofbeats of a horse. Crashing thunder and lightning. A glass being shattered. A door creaking open — then slamming shut. The wind howling. Footsteps.

Cassette or CD
Just your imagination
Made it all MAGIC

The voices — deep, frightened, gasping, screaming, then silent. And of course, the music. One could almost feel the chills, the heart pounding, the look of horror, the search for missing clues.

Sitting at the edge of our seats — waiting. Savoring the emotion and the height of the excitement.

Those were the days
When all we had was a radio
No television, no am-fm stereo

Handa volunteers her services to Miles to Go and Friends of Hibakusha in San Francisco.

SEKI-NIN

(DUTY BOUND) BY

GEORGE NAKAGAWA



Seki-Nin (Duty Bound) revolves around the plight of a young Japanese American man, Jiro Toyota, who is obliged to leave his native America only to be drafted into the Japanese Army in 1943.

The tragedy that novelist George Nakagawa depicts extends beyond these specific boundaries to encompass the fate of all children whose lives have been sacrificed on the altar of filial duty.

An interview with the author is appended to the novel.

To order, send \$19.95 plus \$1.60 handling (California residents add state sales tax):

Japanese American Project
Oral History Program, L-431
California State University
Fullerton, CA 92634

Make checks payable to CSUF FOUNDATION.

PIANOS PIANOS PIANOS

NEW GRANDS
\$74/mo.

\$500 down
15.00 APR/96 mos.



USED GRANDS
\$32.59/mo.

No down
15.00 APR/96 mos.

Pre-owned, Lease & Rental Returns, Trade-ins, One-of-a-kind
HURRY FOR BEST SELECTION!

THIS WEEK!

Select New & Used Instruments
MOST MAJOR BRANDS

KAWAI YAMAHA STEINWAY BALDWIN BOSENDORFER KIMBALL

Steinway & Sons

EXCLUSIVE AUTHORIZED
BAY AREA DEALER



Convenient in-house financing
from 12.9 APR.

NEW VERTICALS
\$39.85/mo.

No down
14.79 APR/96 mos.



USED VERTICALS
\$26.43/mo.

No down
17.00 APR/96 mos.

141 Kearny Street
(at Sutter)
San Francisco
(415) 781-6000

CALL FOR
FREE
PARKING

OTAGIRI

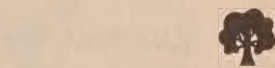
IMPORT WHOLESALE

South San Francisco Office: 475 Eccles Ave.
Wayne, New Jersey Office: 20 Hanes Drive

Japanese American Services
of the
East Bay

THANKS TO ALL OUR
DEDICATED VOLUNTEERS
AND DONORS

2126 Channing Way
Berkeley, California
Tel. (415) 848-3560



Best Wishes
for the
Holiday Season
and a
Happy New Year!

JAPANESE AMERICAN
NATIONAL MUSEUM

941 East Third Street
Suite #201

Los Angeles, California 90013
(213) 625-0414

DESKTOP PUBLISHERS

SPECIALIZING IN:

Brochures Pamphlets

Reports Résumés

Forms Flyers

Newsletters, Booklets

Happy New Year

Matisoo Editorial Services
(415) 930-7834

REDRESS IS A REALITY

BY LAW, YOU MAY BE ENTITLED TO \$20,000

On August 10, 1988, the Civil Liberties Act was signed into law. It apologizes for the injustice of internment, evacuation, and relocation that was inflicted upon persons of Japanese ancestry during World War II; and it entitles many of them to a one-time payment of \$20,000. The Office of Redress Administration (ORA) has been established within the Department of Justice to identify and locate eligible individuals, and, when funds are authorized by Congress, to make payment.

By the time you read this, ORA expects to have located more than 30,000 of those who are eligible. Without the enthusiastic cooperation of many individuals and community groups, that achievement would not have been possible. But there is still much left to do. In addition to remaining eligibles, ORA must account for those who are deceased. Spouses, children, or parents of those who died on or after August 10, 1988, may also be eligible for payment. Thus, ORA continues to need the support of family members and friends to reach the entire Japanese American community—in all 50 states, in rural areas, in Japan, and around the world.

The ORA Voluntary Information Form is available at many community centers, churches, temples, and JACL regional offices. Or, you may contact ORA at:

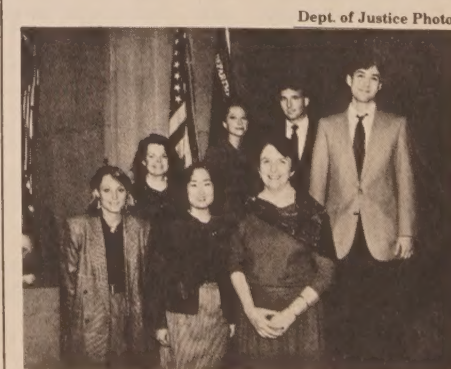
P.O. Box 66260
Washington, D.C. 20035-6260
1-800-228-8375*
835-2094 in Washington, D.C.
8:30 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. EST

*Telephone Device for the Deaf:
1-800-548-0279; in D.C. 659-0213

The most helpful information is: name (including maiden, if any), date of birth, social security number, camps, assembly centers, or relocation centers, current address and phone number.

A bilingual staff is available to take your calls in Japanese or English. You need not submit information again if you have previously called or written the ORA. Because the National Archives has made its records available to us, it is not necessary to obtain verification from there. However, those who have already done so can expedite determination of their eligibility by submitting that verification along with their Voluntary Information Form.

The Administrator and staff of ORA extend best wishes for a happy and prosperous New Year.



The ORA staff members are: (left to right, back row) Valerie O'Brian, Shirley Lloyd, Bob Bratt, Bill Kiyoshi Dwyer; (front row) Marygrace Jennings, Cheryl Watanabe, Alice Kale.